

Services Branch, which appraises, arranges, describes, and references the permanently valuable county records that have been sent to the State Archives in accordance with the disposition schedules. By the time of the reorganization, the local records staff had produced more than 46,000 reels of microfilm, many for security purposes only, supervised the restoration and rebinding of over 2,800 volumes in the Archives and in the counties, and encouraged the voluntary transfer of some 5,900 volumes and 6,000 cubic feet of loose records.

The Guide to County Records is a testament to the success of the local records program. Records listed herein are categorized as either original records or microfilm copies, and grouped within each category by series: bonds, census (county copies), corporations and partnerships, courts, elections, estates, land, marriage and vital statistics, military and pension, officials, roads and bridges, schools, tax and fiscal, and wills. Unfortunately, many very interesting and valuable records remain hidden under the heading of "Miscellaneous Records," but space considerations prevent a more elaborate listing. The brief descriptions included in this guide are not intended to replace the more detailed finding aids available to researchers in the Archives' Search Room.

The vast majority of the records listed in this guide have been transferred to the State Archives from the offices of clerks of superior court and registers of deeds. Others have originated in the offices of tax supervisors, boards of county commissioners, boards of education, health departments, and social services directors. The Archives maintains a very precise registration of the provenance of the county records in its custody, although there is some confusion as to the office of origin and date of transfer of certain records received in the early years of the program. Researchers needing such information are encouraged to contact the registrar of the Archives and Records Section.

The local records program owes a considerable debt to an inventory of county records conducted in the 1930s by the Historical Records Survey of the Works Progress Administration. Interested researchers are urged to consult the three-volume report of this survey, edited by Dr. C. Christopher Crittenden and Dan Lacy and published as The Historical Records of North Carolina: The County Records (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1938-1939). The introduction to the series, reprinted as a pamphlet entitled Introduction to the County Records of North Carolina (Raleigh: North Carolina Historical Commission, 1938), contains an excellent historical resume of the county court system in North Carolina and a detailed analysis of the various records produced by the courts. Both the Historical Records and the Introduction are out of print, but copies may be consulted in libraries throughout the state; there is a full set of the three-volume series in the Archives' Search Room.

Researchers whose interests range over a long period of time or concern a county that has been subdivided will find valuable information in The Formation of the North Carolina Counties, 1663-1943 (Raleigh: State Department of Archives and History, 1950, reprinted with corrections in 1975), by David Leroy Corbitt. This